

183.

THE

PRIVATE CHARACTER

H. H. J.

OF

Admiral *A N S O N*.

By a L A D Y.

*Sic vita erat : facilè omnes perferre ac pati :
Cum quibus erat cunque unà, his sese dedere,
Eorum obsequi studiis : advorsus nemini ;
Nunquam præponens se aliis : Ita facillimè
Sine invidia invenias laudem. —*

TER. ANDR. Act. I. Sc. I.

L O N D O N :

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203



A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

A COPY of the ensuing Letter falling into my Hands some Years ago, I would have publish'd it on Mr. ANSON's Return from his dangerous Voyage round the World, but was prevented for want of the Author's Consent, and for other Reasons needless to mention here; but when the News arriv'd of his late Glorious Success, I determin'd no longer to defer the Publication of this little Essay towards doing that Honour to his Private, which his own Conduct has already done to his Publick Character. I should indeed be glad of further Opportunities for expressing my Gratitude to a Gentleman, to whom every *Briton* is so much oblig'd, and particularly

The Editor.





*A Copy of a LETTER from
a young Lady in South-
Carolina, to her Sister at
London.*

*Charles-Town, March 26, 17 **

*Dear * * * * **



YOU † may well wonder how I
pass my Time in a Country
every way so disagreeable as
this is, at least to my weakly
Constitution. Tho' a sickly pu-
ling Thing, you know I was always a
Romp, and full of Spirits: Spirits which
this hot lazy Climate would long ago
have entirely depress'd; and I who am now
but half alive at best, should not by this
Time have existed at all, had it not been
B for

† The Beginning of this Letter relating only to private Affairs, is here omitted.

* The Date of the Year was torn off by the Wafer which sealed the Original, which appears to have been wrote about twelve Years ago.

for the enlivening Conversation of an agreeable Few, with whom I have the Happiness to be acquainted.

Life is indeed a Burthen every where without Society, especially with the sensible and virtuous, who, I am sorry to say it, are by far the Minority, as to Number, in this Part of the World, as well as in *Europe*: And I fear this Proportion, or rather Disproportion between the amiable and unamiable Part of Mankind, does not greatly vary any where, but holds out with too much Uniformity through every inhabited Part of the Globe.

I have already given you a short Description of this Country and its Inhabitants, whose Persons, Manners, Customs, Dress, &c. being so conformable to what you see every Day in *England*, renders a longer Account unnecessary. — My Acquaintance here is now become pretty extensive, not that I desire it should be so, but really trifling People will be acquainted with one, whether one will or not, and I am too often forced to converse with so many disagreeable Persons of both Sexes, that I am frequently at a Loss to determine whether the Country or the Generality of its Inhabitants are the most intolerable. The only Thing that renders
Carolina

Carolina at all sup portable to me, is the Conversation I sometimes have with certain Officers belonging to three of his Majesty's Ships of War now on this Station, commanded by the Captains ANSON, GASCOIGNE *, and LLOYD. Now and then also an odd Ship, driven by Stress of Weather, pays us a Visit, and 'tis to this same cross-grain'd Weather (as no Wind so bad as not to blow luckily for some body) that we have been obliged for the Company of Captain GRIFFIN †, whom we had the Pleasure of detaining among us for a few Months. We were all sorry to part with this Gentleman so soon as we were forced to. I hope, however, to see him again, when I come to *England*, for he has a great Share in my Esteem, being, as far as I can judge, a very worthy Man.

You'll imagine, no doubt, that among such a Variety of Characters as I here converse with, I meet with many to my Taste, but as you know that I take upon me to be very *nice* in my Taste, so you are highly in the wrong to imagine that I am so easily pleased. Know then, Mrs. *Insolence*, that such Characters as I like are very rarely met with in this trifling Age!

B 2

Now

* Now Commodore *Gascoigne*.

† Now Commodore *Griffin*.

Now and then, indeed, I do meet with a Man who can talk a little common Sense, in whose Conversation one may pass an Hour or two pretty tolerably ; especially if there be not too many Persons in the Company, particularly of our Sex : For then the Conversation becomes general and trifling ; and the Men are sure to play the Fool, in Compliment I suppose to our Capacities, perhaps as Nurses talk Gibberish and Nonsense to Children, the better to please them. I confess, indeed, that too many of us are apt to be captivated by Fools and Coxcombs, Animals with which this Place is abundantly stock'd : Creatures who are the Bane of all Conversation, and the Pests of Society, to which they have nothing to recommend or introduce themselves, but a most consummate Assurance. Two or three of these despicable Things often fall in my Way, to my great Mortification and Punishment, who had always, you know, a kind of natural Antipathy to Coxcombs, especially when the Buffoon is blended in the same Character. Now I mention the Buffoon Coxcomb, I am almost tempted to give you the Character of one, (with whom I have the Honour to be pretty intimately acquainted) and to rehearse some of his heroic Deeds, for

for you are to know that he is a King's Officer, tho' but Second in Command. However, I doubt not but he will soon be further preferred, and then he will doubtless make as great a Figure, and do his Country as eminent Service as many of his Brethren have done before him *. — But I have neither Time nor Inclination to dwell any longer on so contemptible a Subject; especially as I have it in my Power to change the Scene, and present you with a more pleasing one; a quite different Picture of human Nature, and such as we may look on not only without Disgust, but even with Delight.

I have already told you that here are a few amiable Persons whose Company and Conversation makes a great Part of my Time, which would otherways lie heavy on my Hands, pass away very agreeably. Our Governor, Mr. *Johnson*, is a Gentleman of much Worth, and one whom I greatly esteem. Here are likewise several others, who have each their respective good Qualities, both Natives † and such as, like myself,

* Happily the Gentleman of whom this honourable Mention is made, is now dead.

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myself, are only Sojourners in the Land.— But of these I shall not enter into a Detail, my Design being to sum them up in one Character, in which they all seem to unite, and of which I shall speak a little more at large : For tho' you have not the Happiness of a personal Acquaintance with Captain ANSON, the Gentleman whose Portrait I am about to give you, yet I am well assured it will afford you no little Pleasure to be made acquainted with his Virtues : — For even, as I imagine, the vicious, the immoral Part of Mankind feel a secret Satisfaction in reading or hearing of the exemplary Actions of great and good Men, tho' at the greatest Distance of Time or Place. — But I must premise one Thing, *viz.* That as I am not much accustomed to drawing of Characters, and I believe have no great Talent that Way, so you are not to expect a capital Piece; and you must also bear in Mind that my Performance is not intended for the Galleries of the Curious, or (to drop the Allegory) a Place in History, nor, indeed, to be at all communicated to the World, being design'd for the Information of yourself only, and those Friends to whom you may think proper to communicate it. — But, by the Way also, you are to take notice and remember,

member, that you are under no small Obligation to me (whom you have long known to hold Letter-writing in great Abomination) for taking the Pains to scribble you such a terrible long Letter, or rather so huge a Packet, as this is like to be. And I am the more entitled to your Acknowledgements, as either writing or reading is intollerably fatiguing in this odious, hot, lazy, sleepy Country, in which one has scarce Spirits enough to speak two Words together, except in the very midst of Winter. — However, I will be so honest as to acknowledge that the remaining Part of this *Billet* is written partly to gratify myself, in the Pleasure I always take in speaking or writing of one whom I so highly esteem.

Mr. ANSON is not one of those handsome Men, whose Persons alone may recommend 'em to the Generality of our Sex, tho' destitute of Sense, good Nature, or good Manners; but, nevertheless, I think his Person is what you would call very agreeable: But were it ever so beautiful, I should not describe him in the romantic, florid Style of your poetical Writers, who seldom exhibit to us a Hero, who is not an *Adonis* or a *Ganimede*, as well as a *Hercules* or a *Mars*. The Out-side of a Man, let it be ever so fine, will attract but a small Share
of

of my Esteem, unless animated by a Soul as beautiful; for I cannot but look upon the Body as the most insignificant Part of the human Composition: At least, I do not take Beauty to be absolutely necessary in the Men, however requisite it may be thought in our Sex. — But I beg Pardon for digressing, and shall return to my Portrait.

That Mr. ANSON's Person is very agreeable, you may gather from the following Particulars. His Stature is neither high nor low, his Complexion fair and sanguine, his Air and Mien easy and unaffected, and his Address the most agreeable that can be. As to his Features, all that I can tell you of them is, that taken all together, they are regular, and that he has what we call blue Eyes, and handsome Teeth: — For, in short, you know, I take very little Notice of Faces. — Though his Countenance is rather grave and sedate than otherwise, yet he never accosts one without a Smile: Indeed I don't remember that ever I saw him speak without smiling; which makes every Thing he says agreeable, if there was not even good Sense to recommend it: But I always pay a great Deference to Mr. ANSON's Sentiments. — I protest I would rather be reproved by him, than listen to the most studied Compliments that can be made

made me by another. His Voice is low and equal, and he is neither noisy nor boisterous, as many Gentlemen of the Navy are sometimes apt to be; yet he has not the least Tincture of Effeminacy about him; and I dare say (and I don't think I am very often out in my Judgment) when Occasion shall offer, that he will shew himself as good an Officer as any in his Majesty's Service: Yet I hope the King has many brave Men both by Sea and Land, who, I doubt not, would be glad to have an * Opportunity of demonstrating their Courage, Loyalty, and Publick Spirit, by exerting themselves in Defence of their King and Country. But truly, there needs no great Penetration to foretel thus much of Mr. *Anson*, who is possess'd of every good Quality necessary to form a great and good Man, as well as a most amiable Companion. He has good Sense, good Nature, is polite and well-bred; free from that troublesome Ceremoniousness which often renders many People, who may, perhaps, rank themselves among the most Accomplish'd, extremely disagreeable. He can say civil

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Things

* The Reader must bear in Mind that this Letter was written before the Commencement of the present Wars.

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Things without Flattery, and be Com-
 plaissant without Obsequiousness. In short,
 tho' (as I have said) I have the Pleasure of
 being acquainted with several other amiable
 Persons of both Sexes, yet there's none whose
 Company and Conversation I set so high a
 Value on as his; nor is there a Place I take
 so much Pleasure in going into as his House,
 where, notwithstanding he's a Batchelor,
 the Neatness, good Order and OEconomy
 of his Servants, gives one the highest Sa-
 tisfaction. How different this from that
 noisy hurley-burley and Confusion, that
 Scolding and Storming which I have else-
 where seen, to the great Uneasiness of the
 whole Company. He is generous with-
 out Profusion, elegant without Ostenta-
 tion; and above all of a most tender hu-
 mane Disposition. His Benevolence is
 Extensive, even to his own Detriment. —
 What Pity, that his Fortune is not as Ex-
 tensive? For my Part, were the Gifts of
Plutus (the God of Riches) at my Dispo-
 sal, I believe, I should be tempted to beg-
 gar half the Nation *, at least all the
 Misers

* Since the writing of this Letter, the Author has
 had the Pleasure of seeing even her Wishes out-done,
 and her favourite Virtue rewarded at a less Expence to
 his own Country, being happily enriched by the Spoils
 of his Enemies.

Misers and Spend-thrifts in it, to bestow what they so ill know how to value on Mr. *Anson*, for the general Good of the Distress'd. For, surely, if there be any real Pleasure in the Enjoyment of a large Share of Wealth, it must arise from a Consciousness of having applied it to its proper Use; particularly, by communicating that Happiness to others, which ourselves enjoy, and more especially, relieving the virtuous Unfortunate. — Excuse, Dear S—l, these little Flights and Excursions, which are apt to make one Ramble beyond the Boundaries of an Epistle; you know Benevolence is a favourite Topic with me, on which I must always expatiate a little when it falls in my Way.

After the Character I have given you of my Hero, you will not think it strange that he should be my Favourite in Chief: Tho' this is more than I dare venture to avow to any here, except the discerning Few; the Generality of both Sexes, being either so superficial, or having such little Souls, that it never enters into their Heads to imagine that a Woman can say fine Things of any Man, meerly from an unbiafed Sense of his Merit, abstracted from every Self-interested Connection. As much as Philosophy is now-a-days in Vogue

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with

with the Ladies, we have but few of the *Platonic* Sect; few who do not think it mighty odd that a Man should have Merit enough in the Eyes of a Woman, to be the continual Subject of her Encomiums, without his being her Admirer or she his, I mean in their Sense of the Word. However not only too many of our Sex, but all the modern Beaux, Libertines, and Free-thinkers (into which Classes most of our fine Gentlemen are now dwindled) are fond of ridiculing this Kind of Admiration. — But, whence can this Depravity of Sentiment proceed? Is it the want of Virtue, Generosity, Delicacy in themselves, that incapacitates them from comprehending the Nature, Beauty and Excellency of that refined, exalted Species of Friendship which disdains the narrow Limits prescribed to it by vulgar Souls, the the Slaves of arbitrary Custom?

For my Part, I am not ashamed to own that I can have the warmest Esteem for a worthy amiable Man, without the least Regard to the Difference of Sex. This is that *Platonic* Love of which I feel the *Happiness* of being susceptible: Nor shall I, I hope, be easily laughed out of it, by those gross Creatures, who treat it as a romantic Affectation, deserving the ridicule
of

of this penetrating Age, in which every Man (conscious how much wiser he is than his Forefathers were) daily makes such Improvements in the fashionable Vices of the Times, that 'tis much to be feared they will leave nothing for their Children to do after them, unless, merely for the Sake of Variety, or in Contradiction to their less wise Progenitors, our Posterity shall return to the Paths of Virtue and Religion.

Vice, I find, is a rank Weed, that shoots up in every Soil, and, though reckoned an Exotic among the Natives of *Carolina*, yet I believe there is no Part of the Globe that yields its Inhabitants a more plentiful Crop. Indeed this Climate seems particularly adapted to its Growth and great Increase, as you may easily gather from what I have already said of it. 'Tis true some Persons among us take it into their Heads every now and then to advise, intreat, and even conjure us not only to suppress the Growth of these Weeds, but to root them entirely up, lest they should prove of bad Consequence to us in the End. They likewise take upon them sometimes to expostulate with us about the Necessity of being Religious: But our pretty Fellows are not to be gull'd in this Manner. They have

have too much Penetration not to perceive that Religion is nothing but a meer Piece of Priest-craft, calculated only for the private Interest of a Set of Men, and good for nothing but to keep the Vulgar in Awe, and amuse the Weak and Superstitious : For which Reasons, I suppose, they leave the Practice of it to us poor silly Women, who, they know, take every Thing upon Trust ; witness our extreme Fondness for Fools and Coxcombs, who, indeed, pass with us for clever Fellows, tho' we have nothing but their own Words for it. — However, I can assure you that we in *Carolina* are not so totally immersed in spiritual Affairs, as wholly to neglect our several Pursuits after Pleasure. Your favourite Diversion, Dancing, is, I think, ours too ; for we dance Night and Day, in all Weathers and all Seasons, young and old, married and unmarried. Nor are you to think we are destitute of publick Diversions. Besides Balls, which on publick Occasions, such as Birth-Nights, &c. are given by the Governor and others, we have Plays and Concerts, and well perform'd too. At these our Beaux and Belles make no mean Figure, especially the last, many of whom are genteel and agreeable, some few indeed extremely so. At these also I have
often

often the Pleasure of seeing, and sometimes conversing with Mr. ANSON, who I assure you, is far from being an Anchorite, tho' not what we call a modern pretty Fellow, because he is really so old-fashion'd as to make some Profession of Religion; Moreover, he neither dances nor swears, nor talks Nonsense; nay does not even so much as endeavour to pass for one, by equipping himself in the glaring fantastick Habit of a Beau: For which Reason, I fancy he is not so universally admired by our Ladies, as otherwise he might be. However, I know some of 'em that have Taste enough to be of the Number of those who allow him to have a large Share of Merit: Nay, I am very certain that in general he is better liked, than any Gentleman that has been on this Station these many Years. He is a Man of Taste, and seems extremely fond of those Diversions which yield a rational Delight; such as Plays, Concerts, &c. at which, as our handsomest Ladies are also generally assembled, he, or I am much mistaken, drinks in large Draughts of Delight, if I may be allow'd the Expression, both at his Eyes and Ears: For as he greatly admires a fine Woman, so he is passionately fond of Musick, which is enough, you'll say, to recommend him to
my

my Esteem ; for you know I never would allow that a Character could be complete, without a Taste for that SWEET SCIENCE.

This brings to my Memory a Saying of our Governor's, upon my telling him one Day, that I knew a Gentleman who declared that he had such an Aversion to Musick, that it would be the greatest Punishment that could be inflicted on him, to be obliged to listen but a single Hour to the finest Performance. His Excellency replied, " Such a Man must be of a diabolical Disposition." And really if the Face is the Index of the Mind, as some Authors affirm, the Governor's Observation was very just ; for in Truth, the sullen Gloom that was constantly spread over the above-said Gentleman's Countenance, was a plain Indication of the Discord of his Mind. — In short, I can't help saying with *Shakespeare*;

*The Man that has no Musick in himself,
And is not mov'd with Concord of
sweet Sounds,
Is fit for Treasons, Stratagems, and
Spoils!*

I know another Gentleman with whom happening to talk on this favourite Subject,

ject, he humorously swore he would not venture to sleep under the same Roof with a Man who did not love Musick. — Musick exalts the Soul, and, for a Moment, transports it to its native Seat! Awakens every tender Passion, and rouzes every latent Virtue in the Mind! — With what Pleasure have I oft observed its various Effects in the Countenances of those who are thus susceptible of its enchanting Power!

You see, Dear S——, that I am determined you shall never again reproach me for making my Epistles too short: Though 'tis true, you have already been so ingenuous as to own that my Letters (if they can properly come under that Denomination) are of late grown longer than usual, or indeed than you can reasonably expect, considering the Aversion I ever had to Writing. But if you'll farther consider what a disagreeable Employment it is in this hot Country, especially in the Summer, in which 'tis hardly possible to sit down for half an Hour to write or read, without falling asleep, that is, if our various Kinds of little flying Gentry will give us Leave; I say if you consider all these Things, you must think it an extraordinary Favour that I

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write to you at all. — But, now I recollect myself, I don't know but I may have observed thus much to you already: However, you'll excuse me, for you know that great Wits have short Memories.

But, tho' there's nothing in the World that I set about with so much Reluctance (which is the Reason that I generally put off the evil Day as long as I can) yet when I have made a Beginning, and am set in to writing in good earnest, I sometimes hardly know when to make an End. This, I suppose you'll say, seems to be the Case with me now. — Indeed, 'tis certainly so, and you must have Patience with me a little longer, and keep yourself from nodding, if possible: Tho' as *Horace* somewhere says,

— *Opera in longa fas est obrepere somnum.*

Nevertheless, as I am got upon a favourite Subject, I must have an extraordinary Indulgence; besides, I would convince you that all I have already said, or shall hereafter say of Mr. *Anson*, is not meerly panegyrical. I will give you an Account of his Faults too, as well as his Virtues; for I have no where said that he is an Angel. In short, 'tis averr'd that he loves his Bottle
and

and his Friend so well, that he will not be very soon tired of their Company, especially when they happen to be perfectly to his Taste, which is pretty nice as to both: Moreover, if Fame says true, he is very far from being a Woman-hater, and that now and then his Mistress may come in for a Share of him. While ashore, one may not improperly apply to him what Mr. Pope says of M. Voiture, viz.

*His Heart, his Mistress and his Friend
did share,
His Time, the Muse, the Witty and the
Fair.*

But methinks I now hear you ask if this be all that this Gentleman is accused of? Why really I think it is, at least 'tis all that I can muster up against him at present; perhaps by the Time I write to you next, I shall have learnt some more of his Failings. Had any more already come to my Knowledge, you would certainly have had the Particulars now; but it unluckily happens that 'tis not an easy Matter to come at Mr. Anson's secret History, for he is one of those few of whom all Men speak well: Though such a Person I can tell you, is a greater Rarity here, perhaps than

any where else: For there's nothing that the *Carolynians* cultivate with more Care and Industry than that most excellent of all social Virtues branded in *England* (as *Virtue* is now-a-days almost every where discountenanced and ill-treated) with the opprobrious Names of Calumny, Censoriousness, Scandal, &c. But what you thus call scandalous, we look upon not only as a very innocent Amusement, but as of great Emolument to the Publick. For were it not for this, every Stranger that comes to settle here might probably remain unknown among us for many Months, before the secret History of his Life could possibly be known, at least in the more distant Parts of the Province; whereas, by the Help of a little of this same *Scandal*, a Week is sufficient to spread the Intelligence over both Town and Country, much more expeditiously than any Post or Courier could perform it.

Is it not strange then that Mr. ANSON who hates Censoriousness should so clearly escape it?— I believe this can only be accounted for by his own happy Conduct. For justly may we apply to him what *Terence* says of some body in one of his Plays, viz. *His Manner of Life was this: To bear with every body's Humours, to comply with*
the

the Inclinations and Pursuits of those he conversed with, to contradict nobody; never to assume a Superiority over others. This is the ready Way to gain Applause, without exciting Envy.

Mr. ANSON's Modesty, inoffensive easy Temper, good Nature, Humanity, and great Probity, doubtless are the Antidotes that preserve him from the poisonous Breath of Calumny: For, amidst all the scandalous Warfare that is perpetually nourished here, he maintains a strict Neutrality, and attacking no Party, is himself attack'd by none. While others with more than civil Rage are destroying one anothers Reputation, he is only employ'd in the Exercise of that most Godlike Quality, Beneficence! *Men, says Tully, resemble the Gods in nothing so much, as in doing Good to their Fellow-Creatures. Antoninus* also somewhere says, that *Man is naturally a beneficent Creature*: I wish I had found all the Inhabitants of this Country so. However, what the last quoted Author says will indeed hold true, with Regard to Mr. A. And now I am in the Humour for citing my Authors, I will conclude this long tiresome Letter (for I must own that I am at length tired, whatever you are) with a Quotation from the *Spectator*,
N. 230,

N. 230, which I never read without thinking of my favourite Captain, *viz.*

“ Human Nature appears a very de-
 “ form’d, or a very beautiful Object, ac-
 “ cording to the different Lights, in which
 “ it is view’d. When we see Men of in-
 “ flamed, or of wicked Designs, tearing
 “ one another to Pieces by open Violence,
 “ or undermining each other by Secret
 “ Treachery; when we observe base and
 “ narrow Ends pursued by ignominious
 “ and dishonest Means; when we behold
 “ Men mixed in Society, as if it were for
 “ the Destruction of it; we are even
 “ ashamed of our Species, and out of Hu-
 “ mour with our own Being: But in ano-
 “ ther Light, when we behold them Mild,
 “ Good and Benevolent, full of a gene-
 “ rous Regard for the publick Prosperity,
 “ compassionating each others Distresses,
 “ and relieving each others Wants, we can
 “ hardly believe they are Creatures of the
 “ same Kind. In this View they appear
 “ Gods to each other, in the Exercise of the
 “ noblest Power, that of doing Good; and
 “ the greatest Compliment we have ever
 “ been able to make to our own Being,
 “ has been by calling this Disposition of
 “ Mind HUMANITY.” Adieu, &c.

F I N I S.

J. H.

